

THE COMMONS

A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Social Settlement Point of View.
ENTERED AT CHICAGO P. O. AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER.

Whole Number 49.

CHICAGO.

15 AUGUST, 1900.

A SONG AND A CURSE.

Quoted by ARTHUR SHERWELL in "Life in East London."

I heard an angel singing
When the day was springing,
"Mercy, pity and peace
Are the world's release."

So he sang all day
Over the new mown hay
Till the sun went down
And the haycocks looked brown.

I heard a devil curse
Over the heath and the furse,
"Mercy could be no more
If there were nobody poor."

And pity no more could be
If all were as happy as ye;
And mutual fear brings peace,
Misery's increase
Are mercy, pity and peace."

At his curse the sun went down
And the heavens gave a frown.

FAMILY SOCIAL STATUS AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

ONE ASPECT OF THE RELATION.

By HENRY W. THURSTON, Chicago Normal School.

During the last year, at the Chicago Normal School, sociological questions about many typical occupations were answered by members of the Training Class. Each answer was in narrative form and in the first person, as if the pupil were describing his own occupation. It was especially urged that every one should describe an occupation about which he had accurate knowledge. Of many narratives that were suggestive and interesting, two were unique and are here printed just as they were written except for necessary abridgment by omission.

TWO NORMAL SCHOOL SOCIAL SCIENCE REPORTS.

A TEAMSTER'S EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATING HIS DAUGHTER.

I am a teamster at the Union Stock Yards. When the meat is ready for delivery I drive it to the wholesale and retail houses in different parts of the city. I usually work thirteen hours each day, beginning at five o'clock in

the morning and quitting at six in the evening, but I am often obliged to work overtime, sometimes as late as twelve o'clock. I am paid \$1.50 per day and receive 50 cents an hour for all overtime. I work overtime two or three nights each week. I reside on the North Side, but my hours being so unusually long, I find it necessary to board near the Stock Yards. My board costs me \$4.00 each week. I do not move to the South Side because I do not know how long I shall keep my present place, and, besides, I have a daughter who teaches on the North Side and I can put up in cheaper lodgings than she could. I have been working with horses ever since I was a boy and this was the only experience needed for my present place. As I am obliged to be out in all sorts of weather, I am often afflicted with very severe colds which often hang on all through the winter months, as I can't afford to stay home long enough to recover. As I am home but a few hours on Sunday, I do not see much of my family. I have eight children, of whom three are now working. My eldest daughter was considered very bright by all her teachers in the grammar school, and when she finished this course I was advised to send her through high school and make a teacher of her. This I undertook to do, but before she was fairly started in the course, I was compelled to send her two younger sisters to work in order that she might be kept in high school. As these girls were not nearly as bright nor as far advanced in school as the eldest, neither having had much more than a primary school education, they were unable to obtain any but menial positions which paid very little. However, I should never have been able to keep my eldest daughter in school had it not been for their help. The year spent at the Chicago Normal School was another year of great struggle for us, as car-fare had to be furnished each day for her.

DISAPPOINTMENT OF HOPES FOR THE HOME.

During her high school and normal course my eldest daughter seemed very much occupied with her work and had very little in common with her two younger sisters. However, I

thought this as well as my financial difficulties would roll away as soon as she got settled in a position in the Chicago public schools. I find that my financial difficulties have diminished but slightly, as a great part of my daughter's month's salary is spent for her clothes, as her position seems to require her to dress quite well. We had heretofore been living in a neighborhood composed of working people. To be sure, we lived in what might be called the basement of a two-story house. This place, of course, had a very bad effect on the health of my family. Shortly after my daughter began teaching, we found ourselves in the third flat of what is considered a much more respectable neighborhood. This elevation in life was of great benefit both to my daughter's spirits and the health of the family. This is the neighborhood in which we are now living. It is composed of working people drawing large wages and clerks drawing small salaries. As I am home only once a week, I do not know any of my neighbors. The people I associate with are men employed in the same kind of work as myself. The parlor, too, my daughter discovered needed new furnishing before she would invite any of her friends to visit her, so in order to furnish it in a manner suitable to her taste, I went into debt. This debt, it seems, was contracted solely for my daughter, as no one else seems to derive any benefit from it. My daughter's friends now visit her three or four nights each week, but she does not seem to care to have the rest of the family meet them. We are obliged to humor my daughter, as she is drawing the largest salary, and besides, when dissatisfied, she threatens to leave home and board elsewhere.

A PAINFUL DOUBT.

I have often wondered lately whether I have done well in educating my eldest daughter at the expense of the other girls' education. It seems to me as if neither the family nor herself has benefited by it. The younger girls seem very jealous of her and she herself, I am sure, finds very little comfort in her home relations and has to leave the family for companionship. My experience with her education has made me undecided as to what to do in that line for my younger children.

A BOLT-MAKER'S STORY.

I am a bolt-maker. Since I make bolts for cars and large buildings, the prosperity of my business depends upon the general prosperity of the country. I spent no time in learning my trade, nor was an education necessary. As

a boy I worked in the shop, carrying iron and heating it for the bolt-makers. By watching them make bolts, I was able to do so long before I was given a chance. In time I was myself advanced to the position of bolt-maker. This had been my ambition from the first. We bolt-makers worked piece-work, and to a hard worker like myself the prospect looked bright. I have since then discovered that to a poor man piece-work is a method of suicide which the law should keep out of his reach.

It combines the bodily strain with the mental strain. The forced vacations, averaging one month a year, are the cause of much worry. Debts accumulate, and in order to make up for lost time when I go back, I work so hard that it usually results in a sick spell. This is an expensive kind of a vacation to have. The worry over not being able to work helps to prolong that period, and I usually go back before I am able.

SHOP CONDITIONS.

In the winter we work nine hours, while in the summer, when the work is almost unendurable, we work ten. The machine at which I work is about two feet from the red-hot open furnace at which my iron is heated. Of course, our furnaces are kept as lively in summer as in winter. This gives us a temperature often of 115 degrees F. in summer. Besides the excessive heat, we are treated all the year round to sulphuric and other gases that arise from the furnace. The effect of these gases and the constant bending over at the work is very injurious to the lungs and manifests itself in frequent coughs and colds. These colds also come from being overheated. A man usually keeps on working until he is about to drop from the heat when he betakes himself outside or to some place of draught and coolness in the shop until he recovers sufficiently to return to his work. The very plentiful use of ice water often helps me to put in a day's work when I otherwise could not have done so. This drinking of ice water by our men when overheated has been the cause of much sickness. After a day's work our clothes are wringing wet from perspiration and the ride home in the open cars has resulted fatally with some of the men.

I find the red-hot glare of the iron and the gas-light in which I work very injurious to the eyes. When I first commenced to make bolts —twelve years ago—I had very strong eyes. In a few years I could not see to read a word without glasses. Now, with the aid of glasses, I can hardly read the markings on my ruler which I use in measuring.

No, I see no chance of a remedy from a change of employment, but a great deal could be done in the way of improving the conditions under which we work. It would be transformed into a new trade. I am a good bolt-maker, and have no fear of losing my position thro politics, or on account of being of a different religion from my employer. We are not supposed to have anything to do with either, but are not much bothered by any interference in these matters. My employer contents himself with cracking rude jokes about the opposite party on election day; education hasn't refined him.

DISPLACEMENT EXPECTED.

There are only two things that can prevent me from ending my days as a bolt-maker; the foreigners rapidly learning the work, and as they work much cheaper than we do, we expect to be replaced by them as soon as they become proficient—a period of probably four years; again, machinery may step in quicker than the foreigners. And why we should care how soon invention takes our place, I fail to see. Sooner or later it will; if not in my time, then in some other man's time, and whenever it does it will make idle men. The end of invention is to take us back slowly and surely to the common store-house and restore equality between the rich and the poor. I, for one, will welcome the march of invention into any field.

When I first started to make bolts, by very hard and steady work, I could make thirty-two dollars per week. My employer soon began to think that this was a great deal too much to pay to a common workman of no education—he thinks that one cannot get an education without going to school—for turning out his mechanical piece of work. As a result of his wise conclusion I received a cut of ten cents on the dollar. Since no limit was placed on the quantity of work I was to turn out I worked even harder after the cut, and at the end of the week, after straining every muscle, I turned out my thirty-two dollars only to receive another cut of twenty cents on the dollar. And so things continued until the present time I am working as hard for my fifteen dollars as I did for my thirty-two dollars.

THE FAMILY TRAGEDY.

My family increased at the same rate as my salary decreased, until now I have seven children. I began my married life by taking a comfortable little house among neighbors engaged in a similar occupation to my own. I intended from the first to give my children a high school education, and so they were kept

at school with very few cares outside of their books. From the time the first of them entered high school, which he did at a very early age, I saw a change in my family relations. My children seemed to grow ashamed of me, to have no desire for me to meet their companions, or in any way make manifest that I was alive when their friends were around. This revelation dawned upon me as a sudden shock. Their estrangement from me I knew arose from nothing but an idea that my work was degrading. Upon finding that their friends' fathers' were all business men, I was surer of this than before. They looked disgusted when I sat down to table, clean, but in my working suit—sometimes it was the only suit I had. A few years ago they refused to live in a working neighborhood, but removed to what they called a respectable neighborhood—a settlement of book-keepers and clerks. Here my life is not worth living. More than ever am I desired to keep out of the way, and no one in the neighborhood has deigned to recognize me in all the time I've been living here, tho I meet them every day coming home or going to work. Often have I ridden home with my next-door neighbor without a word of recognition. Of course I do not wear a stiff cravat as he does, but I am clean and respectable looking, and I guess my envelope on pay-day would match well with his.

They look kindly upon my family. To my children they are quite friendly, and seem inclined to pity them for having such a father. My wife, they say, seems to be a decent sort of a woman. I alone am the sinner. In fact, everyone seems to be so ashamed of me that at times I forget that I've nothing to be ashamed of and find myself sneaking around the alley to and from work. But how can I expect from my neighbors what I cannot get from my own family?

As my family's respect for me decreases, their desire for my money increases. My money will in no way meet the expenses at present. The furniture is mortgaged, and the other debts accumulated by living above their station can never be paid in my life-time. They are increasing, but in spite of this fact, they invested in new parlor furniture.

All these debts were contracted in my name, and all these comforts purchased with the money I am not to be a sharer in. In the evening, the only time I'm home, I find the parlors filled with company, and of course I am barred from them. The kitchen, or the bed-room off from it, seems to be the only part of the house open to me.

Yet, my family is no worse than other families. It is their wish that I be happy, and they acknowledge to themselves that I have done no wrong for which I should be banished from society, but that I have been a good father. They regret that the laws of society prevent them from owning me as such to the world. Were a socialistic movement put on foot by some one of their acquaintances, they might join it after it had been well started and stood approved.

How they wish I could be happy living in my own quiet little world—the kitchen. They know my lot is unjust, but they hope I'm too stupid to know it. They know I'm not stupid. If I were there might be some reason why they could not enjoy my society. No, in my young ambitious day, with the help of night schools and colleges, paid for by my hard-earned savings, I educated myself until I compare favorably with the high school graduate of to-day. All this I did for myself, it seems, only that I might appreciate how hard and unjust my lot truly is. Had my children obtained their education in the manner I did it would have been better for them.

I had hoped to obtain some help from them when they graduated from high school, but it seems I'm not to have any. The eldest son thought he was called to the ministry, and heeded the divine call. The second has spent two years in looking for something genteel enough. Upon actual trial it was found that working in a shop was too hard for him. So as yet I'm the sole support of the family. Some of the others will respond to the marriage bells I guess, leaving the debts contracted by them as a wedding present to me.

No, education in its existing form is not for the poor. It cultivates the mind at the expense of the heart; it estranges parents from their children—their one source of happiness. It has been the cause of many a misery in the poor man's home. It has broken up families. It displaces love in the poor man's home circle.

BASIS FOR THE STORIES IN OBSERVED FACTS.

A serious charge was thus so definitely laid at the door of the secondary school that the papers were read to the whole Training Class. Two questions were then asked:

1. Have you personally known of cases where an education has been gained at the cost of such sacrifices by other members of the family as in these cases?
2. Are these two accounts of the disintegrating effect of secondary education upon such homes substantially correct?

Of three hundred and eighteen answers to the first question, two hundred and fifty-six, 80.5 per cent, were in the affirmative, and of three hundred and two answers to the second question, one hundred and eighty-three, 60.5 per cent, were in the affirmative.

As those who made these answers were nearly all graduated from the fourteen different high schools of Chicago, the answers were fairly representative for a large city. The evidence of these opinions, therefore, even after making liberal allowance for error and exaggeration, is apparently a strong indictment of existing secondary education, so far as it affects the social status of a certain class of homes. To all of us who are directly concerned with such education such papers, backed up by such opinions, are a challenge to further observation, study, and comparison, and the end that the indictment, even if true now, may not long stand against us.

PROPOSED QUESTIONNAIRE.

For this purpose answers are needed to some such questions as the following:

1. How far are the effects upon the homes due to a false education, and how far to a divine discontent without which there cannot be the human development necessary in a democracy?
2. Of the bad effects described how much is due respectively to something wrong in the individual home, in the school, in society in general?
3. What is the relation between the facts given in the papers above and the recurring attacks by citizens and press upon the public high school?
4. How will the general introduction of manual training, domestic science, and commercial schools change the atmosphere of our secondary education respecting so-called menial occupations?
5. What is the social effect and tendency upon poor homes of our elaborate and expensive graduation exercises?
6. In comparison with children who go thru our high schools, how do children from poor homes, in any business or occupation by which they gain pecuniary and social success beyond that of their parents, affect the social life of the home?
7. How many of us can honestly say that our own attitude toward persons engaged in various occupations is determined by independent sanity of judgment and a sympathetic appreciation of their true worth to society instead of by inherited class opinion and prejudice?

SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS.

A DESCRIPTIVE DEFINITION.

By MARY E. McDOWELL, University of Chicago Settlement.

Read before the National Federation of Women's Clubs at Milwaukee.

Miss Scudder in her "Social Ideals in English Letters" tells of the "new intuition" that is deeper than reasoning and has nothing to do with opinions; a social force, a mighty instinct that is working for social justice, and using the hearts that are ready to receive it. A type of persons in every class, in every country, are consciously or unconsciously preparing the way for the spiritual democracy on which their hearts are set. In Marcella we find this new intuition, this new conscience in its adolescent period; in real life Tolstoi and Jane Addams are fine types of it, matured and active.

RISE OF THE NEW INTUITION.

This social consciousness was awakened at Oxford and Cambridge, England, by the teaching and preaching of Maurice, Robertson, Kingsley, Ruskin and Greene. Edward Dennison and Arnold Toynbee, of whom we hear most, were inspired by this teaching to go and live in East London.

To be sure the scientific spirit had much to do with their emigration from one side of life to that other where the great majority are struggling for a physical existence.

It was dawning upon the thoughtful that the "dismal science" could not be scientific until it was humanized by the basic facts gained from the experience of the workers themselves.

Fundamentally their motive was religious, was a desire for human fellowship on the largest basis.

This same longing for recognition by the larger social circle—this new social consciousness—is showing itself in many ways, the social settlement being only one of many expressions. Since Toynbee Hall was opened in 1885 the idea has crystallized into about one hundred groups of men and women in England and America, each working out its own method with freedom and individuality.

WHAT THE SETTLEMENT IS AND DOES.

Generally speaking, a social settlement is a group of persons who go to live in an industrial community in a large city "where the fact of machinery," as Dean Hodges puts it, "and the love of liberty have created the problem of labor, and this problem of labor includes the

problem of the city and the problem of moral reform." These residents have stepped over the line that marked the social circle they were born into and have asked for entrance into that larger social circle which includes all the children of the Father. Sometimes the social settlement is a home—oftener a kind of club-house of men or women. The house, because of its broad, genial hospitality, becomes the social center, the common meeting-place of the neighborhood. Social, educational, philanthropic and sometimes religious activities organize themselves as desire directs, into clubs or classes. The settlement endeavors to respond to the demands of the community. It becomes a center for co-operative work for the good of the community. The settlement initiates movements for the higher civic and social life. In some places the settlement and the neighborhood have improved political conditions, have secured kindergarten and manual training in the public schools, have been able to get the city to build free public baths and furnish playgrounds. They have provided a place for labor unions and kindred organizations, have improved sanitary conditions and have cooperated with many philanthropic institutions.

Settlement residents do not go to people with a plan, a policy or a proposition; they go as friends, as neighbors with a keen sense of the commonness of all that is best in all. Theirs can not be a handing down of culture or a going down to live with the poor. Real culture, as Matthew Arnold says, seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in this world current everywhere—to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light where they may use ideas as it uses them itself, freely—nourished not bound by them. This is the social idea, and men of culture are the true apostles of equality.

SOME ELEMENTS OF A DEFINITION.

Jane Addams says a social settlement is an effort towards social democracy. Robert Woods calls it an attitude of mind. Canon Barnett says Toynbee Hall seems to be a center of education, a mission, a polytechnic school, another example of philanthropic machinery; it is really a club-house, and the residents are citizens (men) doing citizen's duty, and the various activities have their root and life in the individuality of its members. Dean Hodges calls it a level bridge over a social chasm, perfectly level, not tipped at one end for the well-to-do and the learned to come down to the poor, but a level bridge where the ignorant rich and ignorant poor, the learned and unlearned, can

meet and know each other, each having something to give and something to receive. It is objective Christianity, says another. It is one of the many expressions of the social conscience that is slowly but surely feeling its way into action. It is the feeble but honest outward sign of an inner necessity urging the religious soul to find a way of making real the social ideals given by Jesus to the world. All of these definitions are unsatisfactory because they are trying to define life, friendship and human sympathy—they either say too much or too little. It is not the works of a settlement that define it, it is the attitude of mind, the spirit of teachableness, enthusiasm for humanity, for democracy, that tells in the *living with*, not for, people, yet any true settlement is glad to have much fruit to offer to those who may think the philosophy vague and idealistic.

WHAT GROWS OUT OF LIVING WITH FOLKS.

Out of this living with folks grows the most delightful social relationships. First, the children who ask for no credentials seek the settlement. Then the boys who run in gangs and need to have the gang instinct organized into self-governing clubs; the active adolescent period needs many interests and many activities. So the boys and the girls put their energy into constructive work or play, manual training or the gymnasium. Libraries, reading circles, games, sports, sewing, cooking, singing, drawing, painting, wood carving, all of these are found on the settlement program. No side of life and no interests are forgotten.

SETTLEMENT WOMEN'S CLUBS.

The Women's Clubs of the social settlement are perhaps as valuable a result of the effort towards democracy that the settlement can show. Hull House Woman's Club is nine years old, and has nearly 250 members. Seven Chicago settlements can show strong organizations of women. These are organized generally from the mothers of the kindergarten children, and the more able women of the community. Four or five are federated clubs, in the state federation. At the University of Chicago Settlement the Bohemian women who cannot speak English have their own club of 30 members, and is a section of the English-speaking club of 150 members of the same settlement. A dim idea—an intuitive feeling is held by these women that in their home work and often as the wage-earner of a family, they have earned a right to be something more than breeders of a race; they feel feebly at first that it is their duty to be a part of this onward movement of womankind.

The Settlement Woman's Club offers to women of all creeds and nationalities a common meeting-place where womanhood is the basis of fellowship, the common possession, the common need. At a meeting of the Illinois state Federation the reports from the Settlement Women's Clubs were said to be the most suggestive. They co-operated with the settlement residents, and kindergartens and manual training have been established in the public schools. At the University of Chicago Settlement, a quiet Bohemian woman member of the Woman's Club suggested the need of a public bath in the Stock Yards neighborhood, and it was this very club of women who sent in a large petition to the City Council asking for the bath-house. This has been built at a cost of \$3,000.00, and was opened in May. They have done much for vacation schools, and are always counted on to co-operate with other clubs for the advancement of any idea that is for the good of all the people. This sense of their social responsibility has been developed to the point of activity by social contact and thro the formal program. A conscious faith in the organic unity of womankind, then of humankind, is awakened; individuality is developed, and many a hidden talent discovered in some tired mother, an ability nearly lost in the hard grind of daily routine. At a meeting of one of these clubs a lady—a professor from the University and a Ph. D.—tried to quote and forgot that Shakspearean sonnet beginning, "Let the marriage of true souls," etc., when a retiring little woman with a sleeping baby in her lap and a little child in the chair at her side, continued the quotation, much to the surprise of the scholarly lady from the University, and greatly to the delight and pride of the club. Here was a hidden treasure in their midst, and she belonged to them. Again, when discussing some question with a specialist, a doctor, nurse or lawyer, the observation of some woman with mother-wit lifts the whole club up to the plane of the specialist, and a sense of common congratulation is felt because of the wit of one of its members.

PERSONAL GROWTH.

A member's faith in herself is strengthened because the club believes in her and she will do surprising things as one of the whole club of which, alone, she never would have dreamed. She is no longer the overburdened, tired, unawakened woman, who did not know her neighbors, nor herself, nor her children—not even her husband, until she saw them all in the light of their social relationships. In this new light natural differences, which make for individuality, are now interesting, and women are no longer looked upon in the class sense alone, but as women working together for the common good.

THE COMMONS.

A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Social Settlement Point of View.

GRAHAM TAYLOR, - - - - - EDITOR.

Published monthly from CHICAGO COMMONS, a Social Settlement at 140 North Union Street, Chicago, Ill.

For particulars as to rates, terms of advertising, etc., see "Publisher's Corner" on last page.

EDITORIAL.

IT IS a hopeful sign of the awakening of the social consciousness of the western churches, that the "Open and Institutional Church League" for the first time holds its convention as far west as Chicago, on Oct. 31.

THE implication is not to be drawn from Prof. Thurston's statement of certain effects of secondary education upon families of limited means, that high school advantages are not for their children. But the inference is inevitable that our secondary educational system should be broad and practical enough to adjust the pupil more happily and effectively to the conditions of work-a-day life. Is there not a profound suggestion of better purpose and method to this end in Miss Addam's article which we published in June?

THESE realistic impressions of settlements may have a tendency to keep residents lowly even under the inspiration of Miss McDowell's definition: "Where did you say you are living now, Mr. —?" "At a settlement," he replied. "A settlement; what's that?" "Oh, it is a place where a fellow goes to live in the slums and people think him to be a great deal better than he is."

Shopper: "Send the purchase to —— House." Clerk: "That is a hospital, is it not?" Shopper: "No, it is a settlement." Clerk: "Oh, well, it is the same as a hospital, for they nurse strange opinions there!"

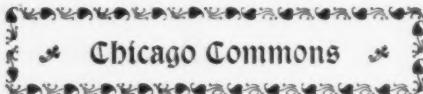
THE Chicago building trades lockout is still on,—as hard as ever in theory, not quite so strict in fact. While the contractors' council try more rigidly to exclude individual union workmen from employment, the unions permit their members to work with non-union men. Our new building is at last roofed in.

SETTLEMENT LIFE.

It was a creditably prompt, yet pre-eminently deserved, recognition of personal worth and public service which the Chicago Board of Education registered in giving to the new parental school the name of the late Mrs. A. P. Stevens of Hull House, who did so much to lift public sentiment to the ideal it stands for in the treatment of juvenile delinquency, and to realize so much of the ideal as is incorporated in the school by the legislation providing for its erection and administration.

It is a unique settlement which has grown out of Miss Mary E. Remington's tenement house enterprise at the corner of Erie and Canal streets, Buffalo, N. Y. Two years ago she assumed the responsibility for the purchase and management of one of the most run-down and unprofitable pieces of tenement house property in the city. Accompanied by a friend she took up her residence in the block, gradually improved its sanitary conditions and its appearance, and brought the building at once to more than a self-sustaining financial basis. The tenants are Italian families, and are living in friendliest relationship with the three settlement residents in the house. While contributions from friends of the work are still relied upon for its maintenance, there is a good chance, as the indebtedness of the building is gradually paid off, of its rentals becoming a sound economic basis for a self-supporting settlement—a consummation devoutly to be wished.

An article on "Court Concerts" in *Mansfield House Magazine* for July, 1900, gives an idea of what may be accomplished by good music in the streets of the so-called "slums." The concerts given in the streets of the neighborhood supply music to people who cannot go to the parks, or other places where music is to be heard. It is said in speaking of the results of the work: "The immediate moral effect is seen prior to each concert when the people of the court chosen, and vicinity—without hint or suggestion—begin to busy themselves with preparations for the great event. The court is always cleaned out, and generally ornamented with red ruddle and pipe clay by willing workers, and tastefully and often profusely decorated with paper bunting and designs of all sorts which must cost hours of labor and many ill-spared pence, and the good running thro it it all is its infectiousness, for the different court dwellers all thro the slums vie with each other in an effort to make their surroundings bright." The idea has spread to other English cities, notably Liverpool and Birmingham.



Chicago Commons

OUR SETTLEMENT SUMMER.

Our somewhat depleted group of permanent residents has been happily andably re-enforced by summer residents who have dropped into the life and work of the house and neighborhood with rare rapidity and efficiency.

The summer kindergarten has been as successful as ever this season, perhaps more so in point of numbers.

The kitchen garden, altho inaugurated when most of the clubs and classes were closing their season's sessions, has been successfully maintained throughout the summer.

The domestic science classes had no sooner closed for the season than a demand for summer cooking classes came from the neighborhood, which we have been glad to be able to meet.

A little group of Italian children have been coming to one of our residents all summer to learn to read and write English. One of our neighbors of German descent, 15 years old, is working away almost every evening with two Italian boys of his own age to teach them English.

Our single bath-tub for public use has been in requisition more than ever this summer. Groups of children come together to beg a bath, and others are brought by their mothers.

Those who have made it possible to turn our side and back yards into "The Chicago Commons Playground" should be glad to have had something to do with affording so much pleasure and profit to so many children and young people. Its use has been regulated only by its space and the number of turns the children can take at the swings and see-saws, sand-pile and parallel bar. Some of the older boys, approaching manhood, who could not go to camp, declare they have almost as good times in the playground. Even the young women enjoy what, by their poetic license, they call their "lawn party." We never have invested our time or any of our friends' money to better purpose.

For six weeks over one hundred boys, by turns have been enjoying our camp at Elgin. During August as many girls will have their turn. In its new site, better equipment and more diverse management by three residents, one of whom is a senior medical student, the camp has rendered a far more fundamental ser-

vice than ever, not only to the boys and girls individually, but to the home life of the neighborhood. The same generous co-operation of Elgin and Chicago friends, which has made the camp possible for the past two years, is making its continuance and improvement this season so satisfactory. The boys are greatly indebted to the superintendent of Lord's Park for his kind-hearted interest and energetic effort in rallying enough friends of like mind to give them a picnic, supper and band concert at the park, which is to be repeated for the girls.

Noteworthy in the annals of Chicago Commons is the success of the first initiative taken by any of our clubs to secure their own outing equipment. The Girls' Progressive Club cottage on the lake shore at Michigan City is the result. On their own responsibility its members secured the erection of the cottage, leased it for the season, furnished it mostly themselves, with a little help from outside friends there and here, and have it in largest use. If now, they could only get an encouraging start in purchasing the property at about \$700, they would work away to pay the balance as long as any of it remained unpaid. No group of neighbors who come to the house have a better right to the rest, quiet, recreation and fellowship which this cottage will afford them than the hard-working, high-spirited and unselfish young women whose club honors the neighborhood and the settlement.

PESTALOZZI-FROEBEL Kindergarten Training School at CHICAGO COMMONS.

Two years' course in Kindergarten Theory and Practice. A course in Home-making, Industrial and Social Development emphasized. Opportunity for Social Settlement Work. Address

BERTHA HOFER HEGNER,
363 N. Winchester Ave., Chicago, Ill.

THE COMMONS

Is devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Social Settlement point of view.

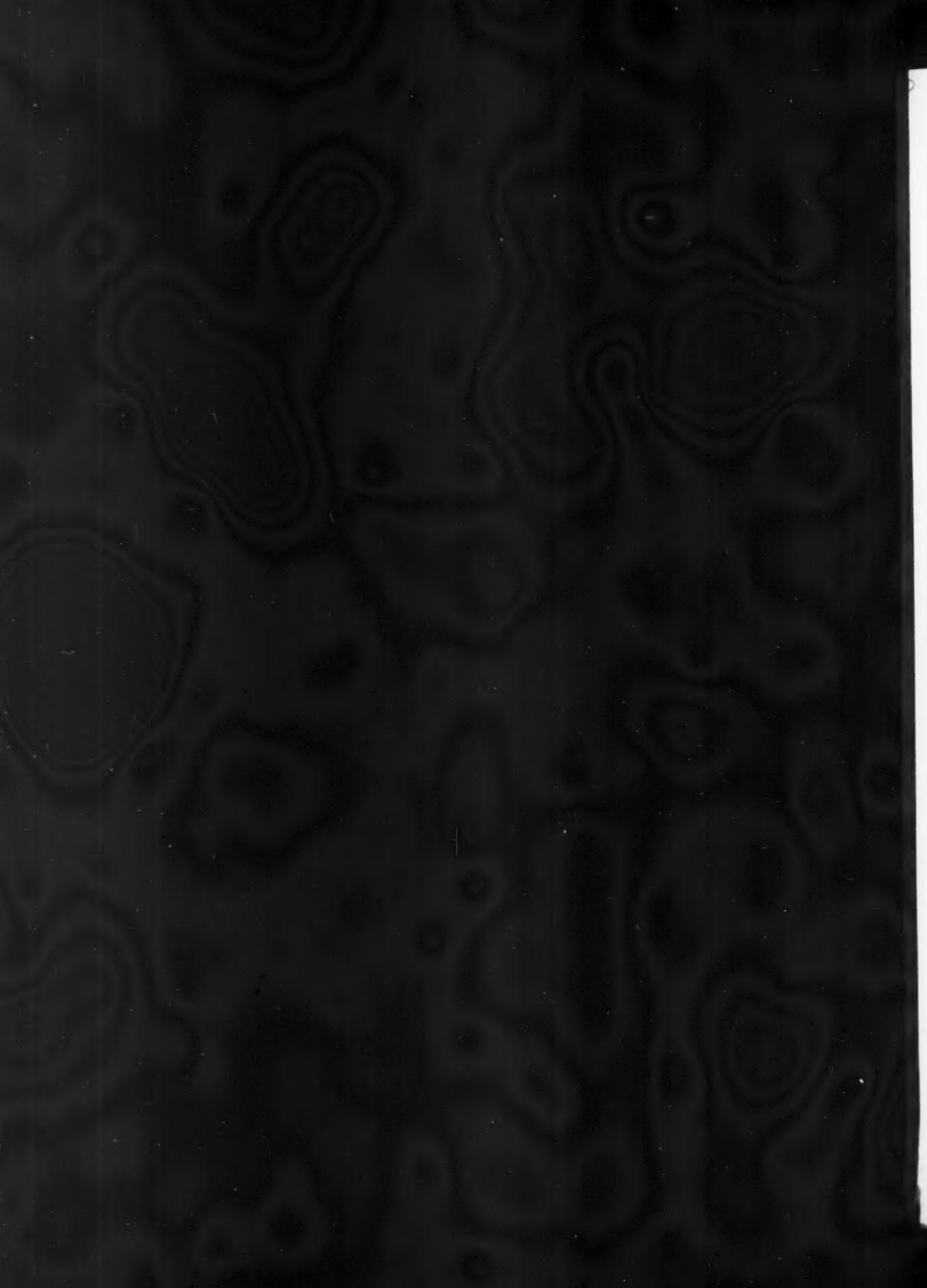
It is published monthly, at Chicago Commons, a Social Settlement at 140 North Union Street, Chicago, Ill., and is entered at the Chicago Postoffice as mail matter of the second (newspaper) class.

The Subscription Price is Fifty Cents a year. (Two shillings, English; 2.50 francs, French—foreign stamps accepted.) Postpaid to any State or Country. Six copies to one address for \$2.50. Send check, draft, P. O. money order, cash or stamps, *not above 5-cent denominations, AT OUR RISK.*

Changes of Address—Please notify the publisher promptly of any change of address, or of failure to receive the paper within a reasonable interval after it is due.

Discontinuances—Please notify us at once if for any reason you desire your subscription discontinued. In accordance with custom, and the expressed wish of many subscribers, we continue THE COMMONS to each address until notified to the contrary.





OUTING NUMBER

THE COMMONS

A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Social Settlement Point of View.
ENTERED AT CHICAGO P. O. AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER.

Whole Number 50.

CHICAGO.

15 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

A GENERAL VIEW OF OUR SUMMER'S CAMP AT ELGIN.

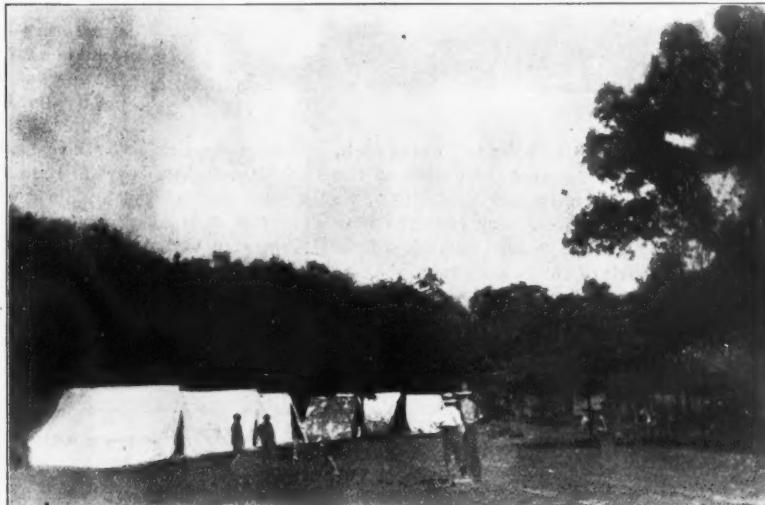
One of the greatest problems that has always presented itself to the public in every large city, is: "What

shall we do with our boys and girls?" This problem varies according to the environment. In our great cities the public school helps during the winter, but when vacation comes the child of the poor is "turned loose" upon the streets to care for himself, while the mother goes out into the world of cold competition to win bread. The child is then

left, like Topsy, "to grow up." From his birth he never sees the natural world. For a landscape of beautiful trees, grasses and flowers, he has great stone buildings. His canopy of blue sky is beclouded with smoke. His playground is the hard pavement, with the garbage box as a playhouse and a policeman as a stop-cock to the safety valve. The boy cannot be a boy, the girl cannot be a girl, under these conditions. But their bodies must be dwarfed, warped, starved.

What can we expect of a child under these conditions? The great wonder is, not that there are so many shiftless and worthless men and women, but that there are so few. The child became what he is because he was deprived of his rightful playground and contact with nature. To give the boy and girl a chance only two things are necessary, and they are

just as essential to the formation of character and the growth of the body as the sun is to the vegetation of the earth. The natural child is like an engine. His life is so full of vigor that he cannot use all his energy. He must have a



THE COMMONS SUMMER CAMP, ELGIN, ILL.

safety valve. First, then, rightly direct that overflow, that surplus energy. Give him room. Let the boy be a boy, the girl a girl. In the city they are crushed. It is too true, as one of our girls said after giving our yell:

"Camp Good Will,
Camp Good Will,
We are in Elgin
And can't keep still."

"When we get back to Chicago it will be:

"Camp Good Will,
Camp Good Will,
We are in Chicago
And must keep still."

Second, love the child. One little fellow said as he nestled on the doctor's lap, and as the doctor caressed him, "My mama don't do this." "Why not?" "She works." These two principles we made the basis of our summer's work.